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BLACK FURROWS

By BLAIR CONVERSE

"Tell your ma I don't want no supper."

Old Martin didn't turn to look at the little girl. He spoke with a heavy, dazed truculence out of a mind that was sore and bewildered.

His mind was fogged except at the exact focus, where an idea burned so intensely that neither weariness nor sleep had been able to extinguish it. So intense was the blaze that for hours it had kept his body bent, so, from the milking stool on which he sat with legs wide apart and the cords of his neck pushing up through the rough white hair.

Between his big rough shoes, wide apart on a scrap of old rag carpet, lay a half grown pig. It lay on its side with its legs sticking straight out: a sick pig, housed in a dilapidated cowshed.

"Wonder they think I got time to eat."

One big calloused hand rubbed the pig's yellow, heaving flank. In the other was a milk bottle. Occasionally Martin would stop the stroking to put the bottle to the pig's snout, mumbling encouragement through tight lips. But the pig's eyes remained closed and some of the milk was spilled on the dirty carpet.

From the low doorway where the little girl had stood, the sunset poured a tide of light that climbed slowly the opposite wall of the shed. Some of it went on through the square paneless window and painted a pinkish rectangle on the tall concrete silo. But Martin sat with his

back to the door. He would have said that he hadn't moved or slept since the evening before, although, as a matter of fact, he had been up and about two or three times and once or twice he had fallen into a doze.

The sunlight was a six-inch band across the wall when Charlie came out from supper. He leaned against the doorpost and the shadow of his head cut a black moon in the ribbon of light. Without seeing that, without looking around, Martin knew that it was Charlie. The fire in his mind blazed up and sent a rage through his veins that made his knotted hands and taut legs shake. At the same time he felt himself grow strong.

That chuckle that his son gave! What was there in that to shake the strong body of a man as the wind shakes the dry corn blades. Shadows danced in his mind, obscuring the intense light, and tears oozed into his eyes. In those shadows was this Charlie, a little boy in the fields with him, stumbling, short-legged, after him down the furrow. That field that he had broken out of the prairie. Young and strong. He had whipped the tough prairie sod, bowled it over. Made it grow corn for him and serve him. And it would serve his son, too, he had thought, that boy who had followed him in the furrow and had taken over his part of the plowing and the harvesting in time.

Charlie, slouching in the doorway, said, "You'd better have had her vaccinated, like I told you." He chuckled again and went away.

Martin took up that "like I told you." It seemed to be about the sum of all that Charlie, since he was a boy, had had to say to him. It was almost as if it were he who had tagged along while Charlie broke the prairie sod. He had been fifty years getting a section under the plow. His father had left him only about sixty acres of tame land. The fifty years went before him, not a series

of years, but a series of accomplishments, the addition of a bit of ground or a few animals, tools or more credit at the bank.

There was enough in the bank to send the boy to college when the time came; nothing was too good for the boy who would keep a section of land going when he got through with it. He had said that a good many times, had boasted of it to his neighbors.

His differences with Charlie were good natured at first. He couldn't see where Charlie got his notions. He could understand that purebreds were all right for a city swell who farmed for a hobby. But there wasn't any thousand dollars in any pig. Charlie had thought there was and might be more. He had been cocksure about it. Even as a boy he had had his own ideas and had been cocksure about them.

Charlie never got angry at his father. He just laughed at him. How long had he had that "like I told you" tone? Martin charged it to the college where they made the boys believe they weren't real farmers unless they had purebreds and tractors and fancy feeds and fertilizers.

Martin had some sort of an idea that, when the boy got through college, they would still have the same relation to each other that they had had when he drove the plow and the boy stumbled over the clods, so far behind that Martin had to wait for him two or three times across the big field.

But when the time came he saw that there was nothing in that. It was a dream that he was willing to put up a section of land and a good many thousands of dollars at the bank to make come true. But it wouldn't come true.

"Takes two to make a bargain," the boy had chuckled, lolling back on a pile of hay, arms under his head. Clearly he had something up his sleeve that he was mighty proud of. "I've got a chance to stay on at col-

lege and teach. I'll get to go on with my swine feeding work, and it's sort of an honor, dad. I've got a good notion to take it."

Martin had folded his knife and put it in his pocket. He strolled out of the barn where they were talking. A tickling sensation of anger had crept into him and was burning through his veins so that he couldn't sit still any longer. He got up and walked out because he couldn't sit still and say what he had in mind. Just when he wanted to be able to talk straight to the point, so that he could really make the boy see the plans that he had mulled over until they already seemed facts only waiting for time to catch up, his mind kept flying out of control in all sorts of directions.

He got out to the big field where the corn was a foot high and the rows bent over the round top of the rise in a way he liked to see. Those rows of corn going up over the hill and dropping down out of sight! When one looked at it in that direction, toward the hill, there wasn't any end to it. The field hadn't any fence but the horizon, with corn stalk fence posts. Martin felt that he had made corn grow in a field that hadn't any boundaries. And he felt a boundless pride welling up in him that mixed oddly with his anger. All alone he had broken the ground and planted the corn. The corn in one row alone, from where he stood to the point where the rim of the hill made the horizon, would feed out half a dozen pigs. He could multiply that by scores of times with what was under his eye. And there was still the corn that he couldn't see.

What he felt was that there was a big enough job to appeal to Charlie in planting that corn, in defending a square mile of land from the enemies that were always trying to pull it back to barrenness, in feeding out four or five hundred pigs, in plowing the black land so that it lay over in long velvet rolls and had a kind of beauty when you thought of it.

When that thought worked through his anger, his anger went away. He found that he was sorry for Charlie. Teaching in a college didn't seem much of a job. He felt sorry for himself, too, for he was giving up something that he had built his whole life on. He knew then that he would almost rather give up these fields than the dream. He had thought of a little boy who loved to follow the black velvet line of the furrow and who would always love that more than any other thing.

Martin stooped down and picked up a handful of black loam. He felt the moisture of it and then rolled it into little balls and threw them away.

An old man, whiteheaded, bent and aching in every muscle, stood up in the dusk of the cowshed, rubbing the weariness from his eyes with rough knuckles.

Time to light the lantern. Time to get some fresh milk for a sick pig that he would bring around all right. No, better wait a while for the milk. Charlie and Frank might not be through at the milk house.

He took the lantern from a nail by the door, struck a match with clumsy numb fingers. The little flame made a hollow in the dark cube of the shed's interior. He set the lantern beside the pig and sat down again on the stool. The big rough hand began again to stroke the yellow flank, a long full length stroke that grew gradually shorter and unrhythmical. None of Charlie's dope for his pig. He'd show Charlie.

Got his damn fool ideas at college. Wanted to teach instead of farm. But Martin could farm the place all right. Farmed it eight years while Charlie taught and a year and a half while Charlie was in the army. A hired man part of the time and some outside help at harvest.

All right till he had the flu and then he wasn't able to do much farm work. That was in the spring of 1919 and

that was the spring that Charlie got out of the army. Fine looking chap in his lieutenant's uniform. Charlie came home to the farm, with Bess and the two little girls, to spend three or four months till college started in the fall.

Charlie helped the hired man break the ground for the corn, and took over part of the milking and other work. In the evenings he talked to Martin about the places he had seen in England, and about a visit he had made on a week's leave to the Percheron country of France. He had got up to Scotland too and had visited some of the breeders and looked over their herds. The old man felt something in his talk, even in the nonsense about pure-breds, that half reconstructed his old dream. This love of beautiful animals: he had the idea that it was akin to the love of the black land that he had wished for the boy. At other times the tickling sensation of anger would sweep over him at the idea that Charlie could so easily discount his fifty years' experience, the land that he had made his own and the wealth that he had accumulated by methods that Charlie scorned. He either let out at the boy with these things or got up and left him.

Charlie would only chuckle in the way that infuriated his father.

In August Charlie began making plans to go back to his job at the college. As the time for his going came on the strain between the two grew so that they didn't talk much with each other. Martin was being deserted again. Not so much himself, either, but the land. Martin brooded a lot while he potted about doing odd jobs and wandering off through the fields by himself. Charlie's mother didn't help any, either. She encouraged Charlie. Said farm life was hard, especially with a young wife and two little girls that needed to go to school.

Old Martin stretched out his legs and swayed to his

feet. They'd be through at the milk house now. He took up the bottle, gave another look at the pig, and left the cowshed. He wasn't sure that the milk in the bottle was sour, but he'd take no chances. He poured it out as he walked up the path.

He had to feel around in the dark for the ladle and it wasn't easy to get the top off the can and dip the milk out without making a noise. He was afraid he splashed a little on the milk platform.

Going to the milk house reminded him of another time. He thought about it as he walked back and after he had resumed his watch.

He had made his mind up about something. Not all of a sudden, for he'd had plenty of time to think about it. He had found Charlie cleaning the separator in the milk house after the evening milking. Martin stood watching him till he was through and then he turned away across the houseyard and out the gate to the farm yards, and Charlie knew that he was to come too.

Martin went out to the big field that Charlie had helped put to corn in the spring. Nineteen-nineteen had been a great year for corn. If the frosts held off until October this field would yield forty-five or fifty bushels of hard corn to the acre. The stalks were high over Martin's head and the ears were beginning to hang down heavily.

Martin sat on his heels looking down the rows of corn. Between the two rows in front of him he could see across the field to the top of the rise where the moonlight glistened between shadows on the moist surface of the soil.

Charlie stood over him, tall as his father had been and strongly made. Martin, looking down the corn rows, where the moon glistened, saw his son as he himself had been a good many years before when he had won this field a little at a time.

What he was thinking was that Charlie and the land belonged together.

He rolled up bits of earth into balls and threw them at the corn stalks.

"What do you say to taking the place over, Charlie?" He spoke without raising his eyes and he kept rolling little balls and throwing them.

Charlie towered over him in the dark so that he couldn't see that the question took Charlie by surprise, that it was a long way from what he expected and involved a good many things. Charlie hesitated. "Well," he said.

"Of course, you'd get it any way before long. But I have a feeling that I'd like to be here to see you take hold." Martin was an old man but he tried to keep that out of his voice and to talk in a business-like way. He was really trying to keep out the idea that he would like to set Charlie right about running the place while there was time.

Charlie hesitated. "All depends," he said.

"I mean the whole thing. I'll give you a deed to the farm and make over some notes I've got. You'll be stepping into my shoes." That was a little more than Martin had intended to say, but Charlie drew it out of him somehow.

The other still held back. He had his dreams too as Martin half perceived, and they weren't the same as Martin's. But the old man forgot what he had felt at times, that the two dreams might have something in common.

"Ain't my shoes big enough? Or are they too big, maybe?" Martin spoke with the tickling anger choking his throat and trembling in his voice.

Charlie wasn't looking at his father any longer. His eyes were following the corn rows up the hill. What he was seeing was the smooth black bodies of great square Angus and the arched backs and heavy jowls of Berkshires and some red Tamworths with legs as long as

fence posts. The Tamworths would drive his father off his head, but they'd bring a premium in the Chicago yards.

"I'll take you on, Dad." Martin felt the enthusiasm and confidence in his voice, as if, when he had actually thought of it, Charlie had known all along that things would work out this way, that his youth would get the better of the old man with his old-fogyish ideas and antiquated methods.

Martin got up and stretched his legs. "That's all I wanted. You go on back to the house." His words were those that he might have used to the little boy. They seemed to say that for a little while yet he had his authority.

Charlie went back to the house and Martin stayed a while longer in the big field.

Yes, Martin knew there would be changes in the place, some that he didn't like. He expected changes. But, though he hadn't bargained for it, he had thought that he would still have some say. Instead, Charlie took the bit in his teeth. He couldn't change a great farm over night but he could do a lot in the weeks and months as they went by. Martin warned the boy, time and again, but the changes went on just the same: a new rotation of crops; trips all over the corn belt to pick out sires for his herds, Angus and Berkshires and tall red pigs that no fence could keep in.

Martin growled and then grew silent, with smoldering eyes. He kept out of Charlie's way as much as he could, finding odd jobs repairing fences and gates, jobs that got harder and harder to find.

He warned Charlie from time to time, when he couldn't keep still any longer, told him there'd be a crash. And Charlie would give his chuckle. He made almost enough off his first sale of swine to pay for his herd sires.

Martin grew feebler during the winter, more bent and white headed. He slouched about the place, silent or grumbling, and coming up against the firm cheerfulness of Charlie's wife when he missed his meals. Charlie's wife didn't say much, but the boy's mother would scold him and tell him that not eating wasn't good for him.

Martin remembered the day in the spring when they finished the new silo. Charlie was mighty proud of that silo, and the workmen were proud of it too. Charlie stood at the foot and looked up the smooth white wall. When he turned round he saw Martin standing at the window in the cowshed.

"We'll have that old shack down next, Dad. Spoils the looks of everything."

Martin turned away from the window and then he went back and called to Charlie.

"Charlie, ain't you done about enough? New barn, new hog houses, new silo. Any way I don't want this cowshed tore down."

Martin could see that old smile start on Charlie's lips. "You won't tear it down, will you, Charlie?"

"Not yet a while, if you don't want, Dad," he said.

No, Martin didn't want it torn down yet. He wasn't done for yet. He'd show that cocksure boy. He sat down on a milk stool in the shed and thought about it. He had an idea in his head already.

After that Martin made the cowshed his headquarters. It was still his in a way, because he had saved it. He had some tools there and did some carpentering, and at other times he would sit on his stool without doing anything.

Charlie found him there one day. Martin was whistling a willow whistle. He looked up at Charlie with bright eyes over his shoulder.

"I used to make 'em for your ma to call me from the fields," he said.

But Charlie didn't listen to what he had to say about willow whistles. Martin could see that the boy had something on his mind.

"Dad," Charlie said, "I wonder if you've thought that mother's getting pretty old to take care of the chickens. And Bess's too busy with the children and the housework. I thought maybe — " Charlie hesitated, and looked down at his father.

Martin was trying to get up. He was trembling all over. He had dropped the whistle but he still had the knife in his hand. Yes, he had a good hold on the knife, all right, with the long blade out. He could hardly talk.

"You thought maybe I'd do women's work?" He had to steady himself with his legs apart. "I'll see you in hell first."

Those were his words and he'd meant them. But Charlie got hold of the wrist that held the knife. The boy thought he was crazy. Charlie just stood there over his father, sort of dazed. But Martin didn't pay any more attention. He was fumbling about on the ground for the whistle and there were tears in his eyes so that he couldn't see very well. He got hold of it and fingered the green bark with a broken thumb nail. Rolling the wet stick between his hands, he began to work the bark off.

He looked at Charlie with screwed up eyes.

"Ain't you got nothing to do, Charlie? If you ain't, I have. I figured I'd get this whistle done before dinner."

Farmers can buy almost anything they want at Lew Baker's Saturday auction sales "under the linden" in Coatsville. Lew has a hardware and implement store and on his own account sells all kinds of farm tools at his sales. Besides, farmers bring in second hand stuff and sometimes animals, a horse or cow, a few pigs or sheep.

Abner Martin walked the three miles to town. He had scarcely spoken to Charlie since the affair of the chickens.

He had been moodier than ever, keeping himself in the orchard out of the way and pottering around in the old cowshed. As he walked along the road he tried to imagine that he was much younger than he was. Every few rods he would straighten his shoulders and swing his arms as if he were going at a great pace. He was thinking that he would buy a young gilt cheap at Lew Baker's auction, and that after she had got her growth he would mate her to the boar of Joel Osborne, a neighbor down the road. Next spring he would get a litter of six or seven or eight pigs. He'd bring them along and sell the boar pigs at a good profit. The gilts he would keep and breed them all for another crop. He thought he could show Charlie something about making money on pork. He ought to know something after all these years about feeding pigs to fatten them out economically without spending a lot of money on the animals or on high-priced feeds.

When it came actually to putting in a bid on a pig, Martin hesitated. They were young fellows standing around the platform under Lew Baker's linden tree, some of them farmers, who either had stuff to sell or wanted to buy, or town loafers who were just looking on. Two or three spoke to him as he stood on the rim of the little crowd.

A young town fellow, Arch Crawford, asked him if he were out to buy a tractor. "Or maybe a Tamworth," he added. Martin only shook his head and watched Riddley, the auctioneer, getting rid of some metal washtubs that Baker had up.

Martin let the first pig go by without even a bid. He wanted to bid but he felt that every one was watching him, and besides he told himself that he didn't want to seem too anxious. He bid in on a second and third but let them go.

He started the bidding on the fourth at two dollars.

Some one on the other side of the platform raised to two fifty. Martin offered three and the bid was raised another half dollar. He heard one of the town fellows call "Go it, Arch," and he knew it was young Crawford bidding against him. Martin held off a while.

"It's the last one I've got," Riddley yelled to revive the bidding. "Nice pig, too, eh, boys?" He got a laugh on that for the pig wasn't much to look at, rough coated and unthrifty.

But Martin felt that everything depended on getting that pig. In it he saw the hope of freedom, something worth while for him to do. He was thinking that with the pig he could throw that "like I told you" back at Charlie with a vengeance.

He tried to be casual as he bid three seventy-five, and he half turned away as if that were final.

The crowd turned to Crawford. "What you say, Arch," "Boost 'er up, old boy." They roared when Crawford raised the bid a quarter and old Martin carried it to four twenty-five. There the bidding hung. Martin was trembling. He pushed his way a little through the men about him and called up to the auctioneer, "Riddley, I'll make it five."

Martin scarcely heard the jokes that were thrown at him as he guided the pig away with his stick. But one stuck in his mind until he got out of town and on the road home. "Nice pig you've got there, Ab." He couldn't see any joke in that. It was a nice pig. He'd soon have that rough coat in shape. And she'd give him some more nice pigs in a few months. He ought to know a good pig when he saw one.

He put his pig in the old cowshed. He hadn't thought of the matter of feed, that it would have to come from Charlie. And he didn't think of it in that way now. He helped himself to a little skim milk and corn when no one was about.

Twenty-four hours he had sat on the stool in the old shed watching his pig, rubbing her yellow flank and trying to get her to take some milk from the bottle. It wasn't two weeks after he got her that she fell sick. And he wasn't going to take any chances. He could bring her round. She had to get well. Even if it meant another sleepless night for him, he'd have to be there to make her get well.

Charlie came out to the barnyard at nine o'clock to take a final look-around. He put his head in the door of the cowshed, but it was too dark to see much, for the old man was bent forward over the lantern. The pig was quiet, but Charlie heard the heavy breathing of his father. He turned on his flashlight. The pig was dead on the piece of old carpet that Martin had fixed for her, and Martin was asleep, hunched over with head fallen on his arms.

Charlie shook him lightly by the shoulder. He thought that if he could only half arouse him he might be able to get him out of the shed and into the house without his finding out that the pig was dead.

He hadn't realized how much of a man his father was until he tried to raise him up by the arms. Charlie chuckled at the idea that the old man still had the bottle in his hand as he half dragged and carried him out of the shed.

Martin's brain cleared in the night air and the feel of the bottle came back into his fingers. He pulled loose and got his wits together.

"That's all right, dad, the pig doesn't need any more milk."

Martin stood still in the middle of the barnyard. He hardly dared ask Charlie what he meant. He couldn't believe that he had gone to sleep. His feet were so numb that he had trouble moving them, but he must get back to

his pig. A little bit of help at the right time, just when it was needed, might be the whole thing.

"I'll be up to the house in a little bit, Charlie. You go on. I think she's coming along. She took a little milk this afternoon."

Charlie didn't know how to tell his father that he couldn't do any good now in the cowshed. He had a feeling that the old man might take it badly, he had been acting so queer. He was embarrassed and blurted out what came into his head.

"I told you you'd ought to have her vaccinated," he said.

Martin took it in slowly. Charlie waited for his father to follow him to the house; and Martin went with him a little way. But when they got to the houseyard, Martin turned off toward the orchard gate.

To our church-yard to sing.

Charlie went in and got to work posting his books. He entirely forgot about his father, and two or three hours later, when he heard some one fumbling at the back door, he couldn't imagine for a moment what it was. Then he remembered and called out, "That you, dad?" Old Martin didn't answer but Charlie heard him come through the kitchen and the hall and go up stairs to his room. Charlie shut up his books and got ready to go to bed himself.

TWO POEMS

By GRACE HUNTER

BLACKBIRDS

When I was just a little girl,
I wondered in the spring
From what far place the blackbirds came

One day they would not be there,
The next the trees were black
And swaying with the boisterous choir:
The blackbirds had come back.

From field and wood and pasture
They gathered there to nest;
Of all the country side, I thought,
They liked our church-yard best.

Folks said they wintered in the South,
And summer brought them back;
But they remembered by what signs,
Followed what airy track?

Now I have journeyed very far
From child and church-yard trees,
But spring-time sounds familiar calls
High in the lonely breeze.

In this strange city of the South
I often wake and hear,
Sweet in the early morning time
The blackbird's note of cheer.

I shut my eyes and see them pass,
A thin black singing line,
With children's faces all the way
Upturned as once was mine.

Oh I should like to go with them,
North by ploughed field and stream,
And with my futile grown-up lore
Some childish joy redeem.

But in that country church-yard now,
Beneath the maple trees,
Perhaps another little girl
Hears blackbird ecstasies,

And wonders in her quiet way,
If she will ever know
The far away, mysterious trail
The homing blackbirds go.

NOVEMBER TWILIGHT

On the train today
A country road,
Rutted and tree-lined,
Made me remember you
Past pale cornfields,
Wan pasture pools,
Not deep,
But sky-encompassing.

A long, long time ago
My thought of you
Was warm as sun,
Or nest of brooding bird;
But now it is cool as naked trees,
Or pallid streak of color in the west,
And impotent as ghosts
At twilight in November.

THE TWO WALLS

By ROBERT J. HARRIS

You would not think he was young if he should pass us now with his grey head on this dark road, crying his "Mary, Mary!" but Malcolm Maclean is young yet and there is bonny youth in the body and face of her that they call Mary Cattanach, that sits with her needle at the bright window.

Go up the brae now with your hand before you for the darkness and ask her yourself at the window why it should be that a young man goes by her in the gloaming calling her name. Ask her where was she for two nights and two days that a blind man should come from finding her and be himself lost with his new sight. Ask her why it is that the De'il will come this night and sough and sob at her window when the moon is up.

Ask her—and she will not give you an answer; stranger and all that you are. She might be a mourner and mute at her own burying, if it was not that now and then she will be lifting her eyes with a smile that is nearer a tear.

You would say she is watching the road. There is but this one road in the Glen and from it above the Black Bridge you will see, when the moon is, the two walls of her journey that go off from the road over the Ben together. You would think that between them they were leading a body away. For all that I ken every man, wife and bairn that bides above the bridge, I never heard that one of them would step between the walls. A man might die there between the walls, and they not know it, nor their spirits.

And this you must believe, that every house and stead-ing in the glen has its spirit, from the green place of burying on the island of the five whins where the loch was that is now in hay, down to below the linn of the

water where you will find maybe a salmon in summer dead in an upper pot that the hard gravel has boiled in the stone.

There are but two in the glen that have gone over the breast of the hill by the two walls and they both living — the lad that will be on the road and the lassie that is in the window — she seeking his sight and he blind in the gloaming to find her.

When I was at the school they would be telling me of a piper that marched into Hell after his wife that was dead, and would be playing the De'il a pibroch or reel for the lend of her back to him — and to my thinking that is not so strange. But that a woman should have found her lad's sight for him in the Glen to the North and he not be seeing her with it is not canny, and how she could have paid for it and be here at the window the day is yet less.

They will maybe tell you at the school that the double wall is no road, but the mark between clans that could not agree, the one advancing the further mark and the other the nearer, so that between the walls fell many in battle that died in no parish and could have no burying, but were bleached there and picked over by the vermin. And after each clan was that small it was empty of grown men, the king of the country sent out and made them to one. It may be that the master was blethering to us at the school and that he knew no more of it than ourselves, but the two walls are white in the dark of the darkest and the wind runs by them on the heels of the De'il with a hurry like a lum on the house-end, and a man is wise who will pass by the foot of them running or who will return on his steps if he has no need for his journey.

And me being old they will ask me, whiles, in the glen, "Angus Dhu, is the De'il a stranger that he should be forever crossing the ben and not stopping? Has he no

heed to the lights in the grey houses? Are they not grey as his face or would he have them white as a corp?"

I do not know. I do not know, though I have stood myself in the first of the moon at the foot of the two walls with my arms spread to hold him on the turn before the wind should run on his heel with a hurry. But I could not hold him. The wind was before him as he came down and it was after him as he went up and I did not catch him on the turn. I could not. The road between the walls was purple and the walls fell over and met at the length of my sight and I heard the wind coming after him like a dog that follows, and he was on me and round about me and gone. . . . So I do not know.

But that was afore he would be coming to Mary Cattanach.

You will not wonder then that a man that has lived all his life in the Glen of Weeping is strange; that he is not sure of his hands that they touch what they look to be touching; that he sees under the light into darkness, and that ghosts of that which he sees will creep out of his eyes and turn them inwardly on him.

The second sight will not set us wondering, for all of the glen have it, either the less or the more.

Would you be hearing of Mary Cattanach, that is sitting there with her needle?

She is dark and born in the glen, dark and with the second sight. She was plighted to Malcolm Maclean since long before the war, but she would not marry him till the battle was over, for she had a far sight of what was to come. But she would not say what the time would compass until the fine, bright day of a Sabbath at the low end of June that I met her at the Black Bridge, plunking wee bit stones in the deep pool.

It was no deeper than her eyes, and they were full of sorrow for what was come to her.

"Do ye hear me, Angus," she says, "or am I over deep in the well?"

And I knew she had heard; that the dark waters were closing — and that Malcolm himself might then be with us there on the bridge, with the sun scouring us clean for him to be seeing.

“He is blinded,” says she, “and I must be thinking of him.”

And, with that, with both hands, she dropped a wee white stone that might have been a heart in the deep of the water. And the water took it into its red throat, for there was no strength of the battle left in the stone.

Through all that winter we would be hearing from Malcolm by the postman’s gig, but it was again in the springtime that Mary Cattanach met me on the Black Bridge. On the morrow it was that Malcolm would be home and I could jalouse she was feared for him.

“Angus,” said she, “have ye thought on the woman with the gold?”

My thought had been on her. There was a woman once in the glen that was married on a man that was poor and had no happiness. And it came to the woman by a dream that the man, had he been blind, could have told what would come at the end of a thing where it had a beginning. The blood of that man is in all the folk of the glen that have the far sight at this day. The woman who was tempted in a dream rose up in the night and reddened her needles in the coals and blinded the man and from that night he could tell what would come at the end of a thing where it had a beginning.

The man would not take gold for his gift, but the woman took gold secretly, for the man was blind, and hid it on the high side of a hill. And they grew old together in the small house that is lying in ruin by the five whins, and the man was weakened in the power of his knowledge because she took the gold. And one night at the edge of the gloaming he followed after her as she was going out upon the muir to the high side of the hill

with a sack of the gold upon her shoulder, to hide it. And the woman fled from him.

And before her lay the road which has no yett from the glen but ends upon the head of a craig, and the path of the two walls. The woman, being stricken with fear of the blind man that followed her, and thinking to wander him, went up the ben before him between the two walls toward the edge of the gloaming; and the man, being no blinder than she in the darkness, overtook her and killed her between the two walls. And left her lying and she was bleached there and picked over by the vermin, for none of the Glen would touch her.

But the man, standing blind beside her, his hand fell down upon the sack of gold, and being old in his weakness he cried out to the muirland and offered all that he had that he might have the sight of his body again and be spared from seeing the end of things. And his eyes came together and he had sight for the few years that remained to him, but no sight of the future thereafter.

And, seeing, he looked down by his feet and saw his wife lying but not the sack of her gold. For the sack had been taken by the strength of the wind.

So he returned to his house that now lies in ruin by the five whins and died there at the end of his long days.

Mary Cattanach had no need to tell me of the woman, for the blood of her and of the man, her husband, ran in me of the glen as it would be running in her that would have told me.

"Angus," said she, "come with me to the foot of the two walls and let us talk while we go, and I will go up between them into the Glen to the North and buy back the sight for Malcolm."

"Mary Cattanach," said I, "be warned. It was only by a great price and after the shedding of the blood that runs in us both that the old man bought back his sight for the few years that he had. You would be buying the

sight of a young man who has many years for him. Have a mind to the price, Mary Cattanach! There are two to a bargain and you would be buying of the wind! You will think to buy the one thing and the wind will sell another. Have a mind to the price! A woman's bargain with the wind aye blows ill to all."

The long gloaming was upon us as we went together from the Black Bridge and stood at the foot of the two walls, and I talked with her as we went, telling her of the price.

"Angus," she said, "have I not thought upon this all the cold winter and through the spring nights when the air is soft with lying long upon the grey sea? Will I let Malcolm Maclean be here in the glen for all his days and not be seeing?"

"Mary Cattanach," I answered, "be warned. It will be only by a great price that ye can have his sight and ye have no siller to buy it. It will only be by a great peril and by a great loss. Ye have muckle to lose, Mary Cattanach."

"Should it be by the price of the delight of his own eyes in me, Black Angus," she said, "I would pay it and think it little. For I would have the sight of him to myself and his clear eyes all my days. Have I not been walking myself all the dark nights with the eyes in the house windows watching for me as I went by and the wind wheeling over my soul and the whaups crying? It is of the end of things that I am feared and being brought close to them with being married on the blind. Why should a lassie be crossing to the death in the grey cloud of mist that is on the eyes of a blind man? For the price, Black Angus, that I shall pay for his new, clear sight, you will not be holding me here in the Glen of Weeping. Let the wind have joy of my beauty, Black Angus!"

"It will not be your beauty he will be taking, Mary Cattanach," said I, "for it is your beauty that ye are thinking to offer him."

I was glad it was not Malcolm that was seeing her, but myself — for she was going a long road and swaying between the two walls of it and could not break through them. She was going dark up between the two parishes and the wind could neither go up nor come down while she went, but was choked and I could not hear it speak. The wind could neither go up nor come down, but was held in the De'il's own kist, so that the air was hard to breathe in the glen and I could hear the hoast of the kye by the water and nothing could speak to stop her.

It was the morn's evening that a man chapped at my door and I went out to him. He was Malcolm Maclean and his hair was black and close on his head and his eyes that were brown were dim with no sight in them.

"They tell me, Angus," said he, "that ye were by her when she went her long road between the two walls. It is now in the long gloaming and the blood of the man that bought back his sight with the gold is in me, for I was born in the glen. It was for the love of me that she had and for the fear that I should have that sight of the full end of things that she had not herself. . . . Lead me out to the braefoot of the two walls and I will go forward on the ben with the wind."

And, knowing that by his words the De'il's arle penny was passed and that he was called, I led him by the shoulder and hand down the road, with the watch of five windows bright upon us and the kye breathing dark by the wall. It was a whaup that sounded three cries over the muir as I set him by the right hand of the two parishes.

"The wind does not hurry for me," said Malcolm Maclean, "for my strength is not yet great after the sickness."

And with that he laid his first foot on the brae. By the gate he went, neither to right nor to left, nor touching the walls, but straight on with the sough of a soft

wind that had been on the water, he went over the rough shoulder of the ben.

Till morning I was there by the braefoot.

Aye, it was morning and you would see the glen letting the night run out at the low end, so that the tops of the hills would have new liquor on them and the lees of the old yet lying under at the waterfoot and holding to the wee glens where the burns come down in spates. You would hear the splash and rush that emptied it from them and you would hear the first crunch of the kye waking at the water's edge.

It was Malcolm that was back and standing by me with a hard, hard laugh. I scarcely could tell him, for his hair was grey and his eyes were blue. I held my hand out to lead him to me, but he put it by.

"I can see for myself," said he. "I can see with my new eyes."

"Did ye not see *her* with your new eyes, Malcolm Maclean?" said I. "Did ye not see Mary Cattanach where ye were?"

For all I knew he had been blind and could see with his new eyes, for all that and above it, the man had a fey look.

"Have I not been to the end of the walls and the end of the wind and to the house of the De'il?" said he. And, with that, he turned round and round on the road. "I am lost, Black Angus; for I have seen her and never shall see her again. The wind has her. The wind has her now. He has her now in his grey house. There is no Mary Cattanach this side of the ben. Will ye not lead me to my home? For in a dark house I shall wake and on a dark night walking I shall look and not see her with my new eyes, though she will be hearing me and will answer till we are both dead. Will ye not lead me to my home, Black Angus, for my eyes will be shut to the light. There in darkness and walking in darkness I'll be living the lave of my long days."

So I led him, walking with his shut eyes, and he set the boards close on the windows and laid himself down to his rest in the dark house. The broad day was spreading in the glen as I went back on the road to the braefoot of the two walls to stand there all day looking. I had friends of mine standing by me that came by the road, and none of them wondered, for they were born in the glen. But after a little they went on, misdoubting by my story that I had from Malcolm that Mary Cattanach was worth the seeking of any that were not sib to the De'il.

The last sun of the day was spread when she came forward to me down between the two walls. I mind that it seemed a wee, soft feather of a wind that lifted her down. She went up dark and she came down the same. The step of her foot was light, but I might well have asked of her if a lassie could be for twice a day and twice a night on the muirland walking the moss and give no sign nor soil of it.

"Mary Cattanach," said I, "the blind are home with their sight from seeking you and seeing you, lassie."

"The price has been paid, Black Angus," she answered proudly, and she went without help of me to her own home.

'Tis not to be wondered now that the ghosts will not gather at the waterfoot in the last of the gloaming to pass the talk back and forth on the water. It is then that Malcolm Maclean is walking the road crying and seeking the lassie, for no man may live in a shut house lacking the sun, and hold to his right mind. It is then that Mary Cattanach will sit with her needle in the bright window before you set all with the candles and will answer his cry with her own.

You will hear the name of her cried through the glen till the moon is up and the name of him cried three times as he goes by her house not ten steps away, neither hearing nor seeing her. You will hear her call him three

times from the open window and he crying out farther and farther for her.

Can it be that ghosts would be feared of a man? Will Malcolm Maclean be fey with his thoughts and his new eyes opening to the dark house he has and the night in which he is walking?

After the rise of the moon Malcolm will walk no more crying, but, with the moon, a great wind will sough and girn down the two walls for Mary Cattanach. It will pass the Water of Weeping without leave of a bridge, which is beyond the power of all but the greatest, and come louping on the moss and the muir and the lower craig straight on to her house like a dog that has been slipped. For they say that the De'il's wind will follow the heel of a warlock or a witch through all the muckle stinking lochs of Hell.

But it is after his loose wind that he comes himself that I could not hold when I wrestled with him on the turn. What has he for a name that he should come to our glen sobbing his black heart and his grey face wet for his lass?

He will sit on his hunkers, sightless and sarkless and white in the moon, in under her window, soughing and yowling to her.

Go up the brae and chap at the window that's lighted and ask her yourself why it should be.

Chap three times. Once for Malcolm, twice for the De'il and the third for yourself that's a stranger; first she will pray and then she'll jalouse and then she will ken that it's you.

Malcolm cannot win to see her by his crying nor the De'il have her for all his sough till the lad is dead. And a mad heart lives long.

Did I not tell you that a woman's bargain with the wind aye blows ill to all?

CENTAUR MOODS

By SHEA HARRISON

In the night a wailing cry
A gasp for breath, a straining at the cords of life,
Inanimate agony, unalterable instinct. . . .
The wind howls in the dark
And furies shriek around the cornices.
In pain, against desire, infuriated,
The soul is forced into the body. . . .

Quiescence:

Life is a sombre stream
Flowing between dim banks of grey,
Limpid, sluggish, quietly resistless.

Growth:

Shout, play, destroy, create
Build worlds from wooden blocks,
Then sprawl them out across the universe.
Be cruel: dogs' tails were made to pull. . . .
Fight, run, leap, fall hurry on. . . .

Leave now behind forgotten toys. . . .
Last night I found the moon,
Tonight I wondered at the stars. . . .
Tomorrow night I'll find a garden
Where the ailanthus blooms, and moonlight spills
Over the modesty of shrubbery and flowers.
A marble bench, where lilacs droop above
And white paths wander off into the darkened green. . . .
Soft music ah! there!
Now rocks, utter yourselves in harmony,
And let all life begin to burgeon forth. . . .
Night. . . . Oh, Sable Mistress,
How kind, how cruel. . . .

With silken finger-tips you shroud in mystery
You cover with ecstatic mist the face of ugliness.
Cool, odorous air, wrap close about me,
Let me swoon into your embrace. . . .

Dawn comes
A coward, slinking over eastern hilltops.
The day is here.

Revolt:
Fire is not flame
Nor is ice forgetfulness.
Strong: burn, sack, hurl spinning into blue abyss. . . .
I will ride on the shoulders of the wind.
In my right hand I bear a sword,
My left shakes to the night a yellow torch. . . .
Now, sweeping onward to the reaching horizon,
Wind at my back, and wolves to brother me in front.
Out of my path: young fury rides tonight
To overthrow the idols of an out-worn age.
Hilarious but grim,
He answers to a surging call.

How feeble burns the yellow torch
The hand that holds the sword, shakes.
Hard lines about the mouth, soften.
The magic of revolt is overwhelmed by pity!

"Helen, thy beauty. . . ."
A dream in orange dusk,
The lisping music of the sea,
Dreams cannot rust. . . .

Mad with the wine of Bacchus,
Dance with limbs that swirl and interlock. . . .
Desire is a flame that feeds upon the heart:

I crush your frail beauty in my arms,
My lips drink in your breath. . . .
Dew-sweet, and perfumed with the fragrance of musk-
roses.

Clothes cast them to the winds,
Let us run deliriously over green terraces,
Swim reptilian in lakes of turquoise,
Lie silently upon cool sands
Protected from the madness of the moon
By overhanging embroidery of willow limbs.

Impregnable defenses of smiles and laughter. . . .
But we are quick to strike
From beneath the velvet of our disguise.
Only with love are we at ease.
In the arms of the beloved
Our watch-fires smolder to ashes.

Days are a string of rosary beads
Counted through listless fingers one by one
They drop and are no more,
They stretch unendingly before. . . .
Slowly they color amber glows
And now they pass too swiftly,
Swiftly-cruel, days taunt us with their flight.
We desire, have no desire, entreat, repulse
Life launches on the high seas
And winds march down to bear us on our way.
Storm comes, and night. . . .
The ship moves on serene. . . .
Yet
Over distant sweeps of sky a darkening spreads.
The drink we quaff so eagerly turns bitter. . . .
Pain: I have known pain before.
No! No!
The seas mumble to themselves
And they are higher than the ship.

Desolate and dumb
Grief understands no language but its own despair,
Day is an eon of unending torture,
Night loosens unnamed sufferings
And so and so
. . . . but nothing lasts. . . .
We are too weak. . . .
Dawn comes, and sodden sleep.

Now the years are few ahead,
Backward they are but a thousand yesterdays,
Petals of a yellow rose blown forth upon the wind.
Sleep "a little folding of the hands to slumber"
Quietly, slipping out to strange, uncharted seas
A grey bark loosing from the pier
In the misty hours before the sun awakes
Softly a phantom ship
On voyage to dim distant isles. . . .

FIVE POEMS

By GLENN WARD DRESBACH

SONG

If we could seek less blindly
For Beauty we would meet
She might not leave so surely
Marks of her wayward feet.

And if we knew, unfailing,
Where Love's own temple stood —
Love might not hold so closely
Lost children in the wood.

LIFE AND DEATH

We set in contrast Life and Death,
Not knowing fully either one —
A coming or a going breath,
A rising or a setting sun. . . .
I do not think it should be so
Within the mind — or in the heart —
While each has much unsaid for giving
And we may come through each to know
A deeper contrast set apart,
Of which less futile words are said:
The many dead — and richly living,
And many living — strangely dead.

TWO AT A PICTURE SHOW

They have not had the words to ask
Romance of life that often leaves
But hunger for it through each task
From which the stealthy days like thieves
Steal brightness — and, yet strangely dumb,
They have a faith romance may come.

And here before cheap signs of it
They sit with weary wistful eyes,
And tinsel robes of splendor fit
Haphazardly on their surprise —
And each one takes awhile the part
That warms and tingles in the heart.

Not theirs the will to pick and choose,
Or need of more authentic schemes.
They take what flashes lest they lose
Worn plots run loosely through their dreams. . . .
They find, with backs so near the wall,
All romance equal unto all.

IN THE CLIFF-DWELLINGS

(Of the City)

I

In crowded streets the buildings, brick and stone,
Push up into the sky hung with the haze
Of smoke, so close no cooling wind is blown
Between them, and the windows have the glaze
Of fevered eyes. The thunder of the street
Drifts up to them and waves of sultry heat
Surge over them. No smoke-entangled rain
Can wash them clean. Upon them is the stain
Of dust and soot from chimneys belching high
Their insults on a gray and weary sky.
These are cliff-dwellings of our modern days:
Hotels, apartment houses, tenements,
Pushing each other; to and from them strays
The pageant of our lives, loves, discontents,
And dreams and lack of dreams, and over all
Hangs crash of sound, and smoke is like a pall.
Near sun and stars, the sun and stars are hidden;
The moon comes pale up sooted stairs of sky.
The dwellings reach to skies but are forbidden
The sense of things grown beautiful and high.
The rooms are like the lives lived in them. There
A nation writes its endless chronicles
Of love and hate, of wealth and slow despair,
Of hope, and commonplace that therein dwells.

II

Have old gods all deserted us? We turn
To new gods claiming all they cannot give.
The altar fires in strange places burn.
We rush to little ends and die to live.
Our feet are restless. Squeak the clarinet

And pound the drums and, overfed, arise
To cling and sway in dance. We must forget
The urge we failed, the lofty dream that dies.
Our hands are weary, yet they must not drop.
They reach and grasp — there is so much to hold!
The music sounds and dancers dare not stop.
There's much to buy and one must pay with gold.
Our brains are weary. . . . Dreams are all so old!

III

The petty wars bring rumors of great wars.
We lift our eyes, but fear to read the stars.
False prophets shout beyond the market place
And lies turn leprous spots upon the face;
Sleek prophets spread spoiled honey of their lies
Upon the page where we are stuck like flies.
We are the children of the pioneers —
The mark of soil is washed from us, but leers
A Fate above us, grotesque and unclean
Of heart, in sleep and play and nervous toil. . . .
It strikes us often — but is seldom seen.
O God, we lost the soft touch of your soil,
The breath of meadows and the lift of hills,
And space we needed for clear eyes to see
A new day weakened by our troubled wills
Strained in a moment's false intensity.

IV

A park is out of shadow of these walls.
There come the hungry-hearted to the grass
To feel again the warmth of sun that falls
Alike on all the people who may pass.
The artificial lake is rippled bright
And laughter rings where bathers feel the slow
Cool fingers of the waters. Trees are swayed
Along the winding paths where lovers go

And mothers rock their infants in the shade.
A little spot of earth — a lap of God!
There weary heads may press upon the sod
And dream again of wood and blossomy lane
And old roofs softly slumberous with rain.
There little feet may run and bodies sprawl
Without dark bruises coming for the fall,
There old men sit with half closed eyes and nod
Grown wistful of the peace that fills the sod.

V

Old gods have not deserted us. They wait
Beyond cliff-dwellings shadowing the street,
Where dreams can find them, and there is no gate
Steel-spiked and locked to turn us in defeat,
When all our wistfulness had led us near,
Like beggars from the mansions guarded here.
Old gods we have deserted! . . . Still are flamed
Their altars with the flowers we once named
Wild rose, and golden rod, and clover, red
With kisses fairies gave it when they fled.
And still the blossoms shower where they pass
And violets mark trails in hillside grass.
And in each place where graceful willows stir
Beyond tall rushes where the locusts whirl
And lilies rock at anchor in the stream
Like fairy ships from hinterlands of dream
There is a sound of reed pipes blowing still
In nooks between the knees of some bowed hill.
But ask no dweller in these open lands
Which way to go. Too heavy are his hands
With harvest to be raised and point the way
He has not gone. His feet in rows of hay
Are tangled, and his dreams are turned to corn.
He has not heard the bob-o-link at morn
Shake dew of music over him. . . . Too near
He stayed to see, and we too far from here!

VI

Our feet are restless. Squeak the clarinet
And pound the drums and, overfed, arise
To cling and sway in dance. We must forget
The urge we failed, the lofty dream that dies. . . .

The night is heavy on us. Toss and turn!
Few lights now in the cliff-high windows burn.

A LONELY ROAD

When Abner Jordan died at fifty-nine,
Worn out with the resistance of the soil
That had new reënforcements of the stones
Each season worked upward from supply
That seemed exhaustless in the hills, he left
The farm in keeping of a childless wife,
Named Martha, who was forty, plump and fair.
She had been born among the hills and knew
Their stern demands, but Abner had been kind
In his gruff way. She dared not leave the farm.
It was a part of her. She did not love
The place but took it as her lot, and grew
So lonely she was half afraid of it.
The crops were harvested when Abner died
And they meant only cash enough to start
Another battle with the soil. . . . Alone,
She dared not face the planting and for hours
Would sit and watch the lonely road and weep.

At heart a born reformer, Martha found
She could not change her loneliness by thought
And talk, although ten years before his death
She caused her husband to resign tobacco
Because she said it helped to keep him thin.

Now there was nothing but a lonely road
To watch for hours, and for a week at times
No one passed by. She took to making dreams
Of lonely men who might come by that way
And find salvation from a world of ills.
She pictured most a man near her own age,
A little gray, with wistful eyes, perhaps
A little given to some need of change
From harmful ways, or wanting mothering
To make his life complete. Her loneliness
Grew eloquent for pondering the dream. . . .
The nearest that she came to happiness
Through that first quiet winter was when chills
Came on the ancient cat, the only thing
To need quick care to save it, and she thrilled
To think how soon she made it purr again.

Thaws started in and, looking down the road,
She almost lost her faith a man would come
To do the planting and find his reward,
And she began to plan to rent the place
Although she knew no one would pay a price
To let her live, for such unkindly soil.
Then one day while she watched, a stranger came
Along the road. She saw him drawing near
And fixed her hair and smiled her brightest smile
That lasted while she opened to his knock
And heard him say, "Down to the village store
They said you might be needing one to work."
She found words slowly, as if much in doubt
About the thing to say — he did not seem
Exactly what she might expect, but still
Someone must do the planting.

"Yes," she said,
I need a man to work the farm. Come in."
He was a shabby little man whose face

Was tanned and looked like leather left in rain,
And words were hard for him. At last he said,
"The farm I had last year was mortgaged down —
Bad crops and storms, and wife sick all the time."

"Your wife?" said Martha, as if in surprise,
"And did she die?"

"No'm. She is strong enough
To be about again. She's waiting now
Down to the village till I find a place.
Three young 'uns with her!" And his weathered lips
Were stretched into a smile. "I see you got
A shed out in the yard, and that would do
For us to live in. Wouldn't clutter up
Your house at all."

Then Martha sighed and said,
"I must have someone here to tend the farm.
What pay will you be wanting?"

And he named
A wage so low she could not make complaint.
"The work'll have to start in soon," he mused.
"We got no place to go. We'll work for keep
Until the farm needs us." His wistful eyes
Clung to her shifting glance. At last she said,
"Well, fix the shed to suit yourself. There's boards
Enough for it about the place. It's sure
I got to have someone to work the farm."

She watched his quickened steps go down the road —
The lonely road that she would have to watch
With some new fear of its indifference.

TWO POEMS

By LEONARD LANSON CLINE

STILL-LIFE

I

Across our bed the shaded lamplight flows
And falls, a yellow silence, over you,
Over pillow and tufted quilt of blue;
And all your beauty, perfect in repose
Lies here insentient, careless that I keep
My eyes upon you in a warm caress.
This is the purity of loveliness
Unused and unembarrassed. This is sleep.

Upon the quilt one smooth white arm lies bare,
And under it your body is revealed
In curve and fullness; and your mouth, concealed
In the abundance of your red-gold hair,
Warms with its breath your pillow fragrantly.
This is the attitude of your last thought
When you lay drowsy, dreaming, and slumber caught
You unaware and gave you thus to me.

Your last vague languid thought: perhaps a whim
That when your lover entering heedlessly
Turned on the light, your tranquil beauty be
Disposed with gentle guile to vanquish him?
The plot almost miscarried; the coquette
Fell prey to sleep, and then that wanton arm
Flung out across your breast, thus, being warm —
But by its mischief left you lovelier yet!

II

A naiad has been here — here where I stand
On the wide shore of sleep — and here she gave

The wind her nakedness and then the wave;
This is her raiment left upon the sand.
And O, how timorous a nymph is she!
Out of the water if I speak she slips,
Gathers the robe about her glistening hips,
And peers a minute startled even at me.

Little enough, a tunic on the beach;
And yet a cloth more rare than gossamer,
Fabric of flesh that is all life to her,
Vision and hearing, love and song and speech.
And were it stolen, what could she do then,
The poor white naked nymph, but cry and call
Along the shore and find no word at all
To reach my ear and thrill my heart again?

O, to have eyes, that I could now pursue,
Or, hiding here till from the blue-green surge
Of waves your gull-white shoulders should emerge,
That I could see the naiad that is you!
But I am blind, and all I know is this,
This body that withholds you like a gown,
This mask across the smile beneath your frown,
All that my arms have clasped, my mouth has kissed.

III

Turn out the light, and let the midnight pour
In the wide window. So, goodnight, goodnight!
To all the darkened houses and the light
That still is shining in the house next door:
Goodnight, late dreamer, may your vigil flame
Into some song or story! Down the street
Goes a policeman whistling on his beat:
Goodnight, all's well, and may it dawn the same!

The wind brings in the scent of flowering things
And throb of dim inexplicable sounds
Out of the teeming earth where life abounds:
Goodnight, small brother with the tired wings,
And little sister with your petals tired
Of so much sun! And goodnight, father oak,
Beneath whose leaves dead thousands of my folk
Have broken bread and pondered and aspired!

And like a gentle wind the darkness blows
Out of the shoreless sea where stars careen
As bright and blind as ours, and worlds unseen
Grow tired like ours and seek at last repose:
To each my brother there that dims his light
And gazes for a little on the sky,
Silent for love and beauty, ere he lie
By his love's side to sleep, goodnight, goodnight!

TROPIC

Your delicate reluctances
Upon my eyes and forehead blow
Like breezes, wafting from below
The sea-rim where a harbor is:

Like little tepid winds they drift
Across the swaying sea, and bear
Prescience of shores and gardens where
Desire and dream twin towers lift.

A gray shed petal is your sigh
Brushing my lips. I watch the moon
Sink through the sky, a white cocoon;
And soon the yellow butterfly

Of dawn across the glaucous sea
Will spread its quivering wings, and there

A shore of golden sand, a stair
Of mounting purple hills will be!

Your delicate reluctances
Are little winds that seem to blow
Against me, wafting from below
The sea-rim where a harbor is:

They lure me with a prescience of
The languid gardens of your love.

WINTER WHEAT

By AVERY ABBOTT

Icy rain,
Smiting the windows, slashing through the gutters;
When the rain ends, all the pretty gauds of summer
Will crisp black.
But I remember driving to meet an autumn sunset,
Between fields rolling away in huge-breasted billows.
Many lay dark and soft as the harrow had left them,
Purpling with the afterglow,
While all across them ran a quickening,
A mist of ineffable emerald.
Then some one cried: "The winter wheat!"
And I know how those fields, eager with the thirst of
growth,
Are drinking the last cold drop,
To pour it out again,
In a golden flood of food,
Filling hungry bins and stirring the wheels of mills.
There will be rounded loaves,
Smelling homely and sweet,
And I think of the little white teeth and the dimpled flesh
Of children.

THE MIDLAND LIBRARY

HIGHWAYMEN, BY CHARLES J. FINGER*

A Review by JOHN T. FREDERICK

It is past midnight — a day's work and an evening's work done, and time to be in bed. But here is my friend Finger's book that I want to read: possibly a chapter, a short one, while I warm my feet and eat an apple.

And so I am off with Dick Turpin, on his mad ride to York — a ride that only a man who himself has ridden all night, and who loves horses, can understand. Then there is the tale of Claude Duval, with the king and the page together in the powerful woodcut by Honore, and so I read through to the coranto on the moor below Wycomb hills, and to Tyburn at the end, and the great oak-paneled room in the Tangier Tavern where eight tall tapers burn, and the cortege with flambeaux and muffled drums. Then comes the vivid chapter, "A Net of Loose Fish," with its strange and noteworthy procession:

"Blueskin, black-browed and athletic; Jonathan Wild, squint-eyed, squat, malevolent; Sixteen-String Jack, marching with happy swagger, ablaze with fluttering ribbons and laced hat and tasseled boots. . . . Then a crowd of fellows who died or rotted in prisons, without a name — footpads, alley thieves, cutpurses, loafers, sneaks, hangers-on, and, walking alone, Cartouche, robber without courtesy or generosity. But there are banners and bands of music, and a roaring song, and the Duke of Guise comes with his army of three thousand five hundred outlaws in coats of Spanish leather with sleeves of velvet, their breeches of scarlet cloth trimmed with gold, each with his leather girdle from which dangles a cutlass full three fingers broad and two feet long. . . ."

And James Maclean, fellow of Walpole and Chesterfield, host of Johnson — I must read of him: of his ironic

*Robert M. McBride, \$3.00.

generosity, and of Parsons with the white clothes and the ruby in his boot-toe, and of genial Dr. Plunkett, of whom I would like to know more. Is it his name that makes me think of him as plump and debonair, with moleskin somewhere about him?

Wild, the hideous, the grotesque—I rejoice in the looting of his hoards. Then I turn back to follow the fortune of Colonel Thomas Blood to the theft of a crown and the amazing sentence of its owner's favor. I watch where Jack Sheppard, hand-cuffed and chained to the floor, is visited by John Gay and Defoe and Hogarth; and follow him in his incredible toil and triumph of escape to the sickening penalty of his stupid hope for a fate like Colonel Blood's.

Finally I turn to the last chapter, "Bill of Tierra del Fuego", for I have sensed that here is the cream of the book. And here, good friends and citizens, is more than a masterpiece of narration, more than the brilliantly achieved presentation of a violent, rather thick-witted, and essentially heroic human being. Here is an epic of adventure, filled with the glow of life itself. Here are the romance of the far away mingled with the romance of reckless daring and of strange compassion. Against the background of a remote and savage land and sea, a gross, quaint being of indubitable flesh and blood rides on lunatic adventures and fights raw battles and saves worthless lives in a gigantic conquest of cold and storm and night.

It is a beautiful tale, Finger, this which you have written. It lifts your book out of the realm of the merely strange and absorbing and makes it live. For Bill of Tierra del Fuego is alive for me, with the deathless life of the pawnbroker of Poictesme, and the broken Hurstwood, and the Tall Soldier, and of how few others of those who move in American books. You have made literature, or I am mistaken. Bill Downer shows me some-

thing common in all men, something that links me, and my sons, and men unborn, with these bright outlaws of old time, with every one in your incredible procession of the reckless, the cowardly, and the lost. I am moved by a new sense of the vast tumultuous yearning of the race, the harmony of common joys and sorrows arising from the brief music of innumerable lives. And, looking out on this gray town, all sleeping now, I reflect that it is a strange and beautiful world, and that on leaving it I shall be not so much sorry to die as glad that I have lived.

I know that I shall turn back to the story of Bill Downer, Finger, to read it again and again. For into it you have put Romance itself — not merely that of the strange and the daring and the far away, but the Romance that is at the heart of life: is life, perhaps, when all is said and done. For I see little else that is so real. . . .

Sometimes it is worth while, even to a pedagogue, to stay up till dawn.

BRIEF REVIEWS

Art Training for Life and for Industry (The Manual Arts Press, Peoria, Illinois) is a little volume which possesses especial interest for middle western readers who are alive to the growing possibilities of the arts in our region at the present time. The author, Charles A. Bennett of Peoria, Illinois, has done fine service for the cause of the arts in the middle west, both through the publications of his "Manual Arts Press", of which this book is one of the most recent, and in various personal ways. He was largely responsible for the collection and publication of the *Peoria Book of Verse*, which was one of the best civic collections of poetry ever made. In the present volume Mr. Bennett shows in an interesting, informal way the importance of art training in relation both to life in general and to industry, and points out the great opportunities that exist at present to extend art training in this country.

J. T. F.

"*Piney Woods*" and *Its Story*, by LAURENCE C. JONES (fourth edition). (Revell, \$1.50). Here is a human document of extraordinary interest — not merely in its educational and sociological aspects, but also as a revelation of the truly heroic in human nature. I have been compelled to read it; at a time when I had no intention of sparing time from urgent duties, glimpses of the narrative as I turned its pages so interested me that perforce I went back to the beginning and read straight through. Laurence Clifton Jones is a young negro, born in Missouri and a graduate of the Marshalltown, Iowa, High School and of the State University of Iowa, who went into the hill district of Mississippi to work for his race. In a decade, beginning without funds except his own enthusiasm and with little encouragement from the people themselves, and conducting his first school in a deserted cabin, he has created a center of industrial and agricultural education which reaches thousands every year and which has large brick buildings, a modern printing plant, and a productive farm. All of the students work, either on the farm or in the shops. Some pay all of their expenses in this way, while others work fewer hours and pay part of their tuition in money. Mr. Jones has told the story of these years in a simple, straightforward way which is highly effective. He is especially generous in his acknowledgment of assistance received from many and varied sources. But more than anything else the book demonstrates to me the social necessity of leaders, of superior men. I see in the story of what Laurence Jones has done not only a demonstration of the possibilities of education in the south, but a profoundly suggestive commentary on all modern education. I commend the book to the attention of every reader of THE MIDLAND.

J. T. F.

We Explore the Great Lakes, by WEBB WALDRON. (Century, \$3.50). Webb Waldron's latest book, *We Explore the Great Lakes*, is the journal of a trip that he and his wife took on the Great Lakes. They secured passage on an empty freighter going from Buffalo to Ashland, went on to Duluth, and, after side-trips to Hibbing to see an iron mine and to Isle Royale, sought the Michigan shore by way of Marquette, Escanaba, and Menominee, and then followed the lower shores of Michigan and Huron by land and water back to Detroit. From Detroit they went through Toledo and Cleveland to Buffalo, their starting point. That, then, is the bare outline of the trip. Stories of

shipping disasters, Paul Bunyan yarns, side lights on the house of David, and interesting bits of history embellish the journal. The book conveys much information without being dogmatic, for Mr. Waldron has realized that the passing observer can form an opinion that is only tentative. Of human interest there is much. The crew of the freighter, Bjorvik and Kvalvik, who fish at Isle Royale, the Milwaukee booster, the Dune Faun, the Charlevoix candidates, and Eddie Guest are a few of the interesting and sometimes humorous characters. The most serious part of the book is the chapter devoted to a non-partisan discussion of the Great Lakes to Ocean Waterway. The book is illustrated with appropriate sketches by Mrs. Waldron and supplied with a quaintly individual map.

E. P. F.

The Harp-Weaver and other Poems, by EDNA ST. VINCENT MILLAY (Harper, \$2.00). The finest thing in Miss Millay's new book of lyrics, to my way of thinking, is this short poem called "Autumn Chant":

Now the autumn shudders
In the rose's root.
Far and wide the ladders
Lean among the fruit.

Now the autumn clambers
Up the trellised frame,
And the rose remembers
The dust from which it came.

Brighter than the blossom
On the rose's bough
Sits the wizened, orange,
Bitter berry now;

Beauty never slumbers;
All is in her name;
But the rose remembers
The dust from which it came.

With the exception of this and two or three comparable poems, the new book does not add to the distinction of Miss Millay's contribution to the contemporary field. There is much of her old vividness and pregnancy of phrase, and the same exquisite handling of metres. But there is no new emotional appeal, nor, on the whole, any perceptible deepening or increased sureness in her familiar moods.

J. T. F.

An Engineer's Notebook, by WILLIAM MCFEE. (Robert Hicks, 4 Christopher Street, New York, \$1.00). This is a pleasant little group of essays, ranging in subject from wayfaring to mechanics. It is probably the least significant of the McFee *opera*, but like all the rest is well worth reading and owning.

J. T. F.

CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE

BLAIR CONVERSE is a teacher of agricultural journalism at Iowa State College, Ames, Iowa. *Black Furrows* is his first published story of a serious nature.

GRACE HUNTER is a teacher in the junior college at Fort Dodge, Iowa. Her work has appeared in earlier issues of THE MIDLAND. *Blackbirds* recalls in part her experience as a teacher at Tulsa, Oklahoma.

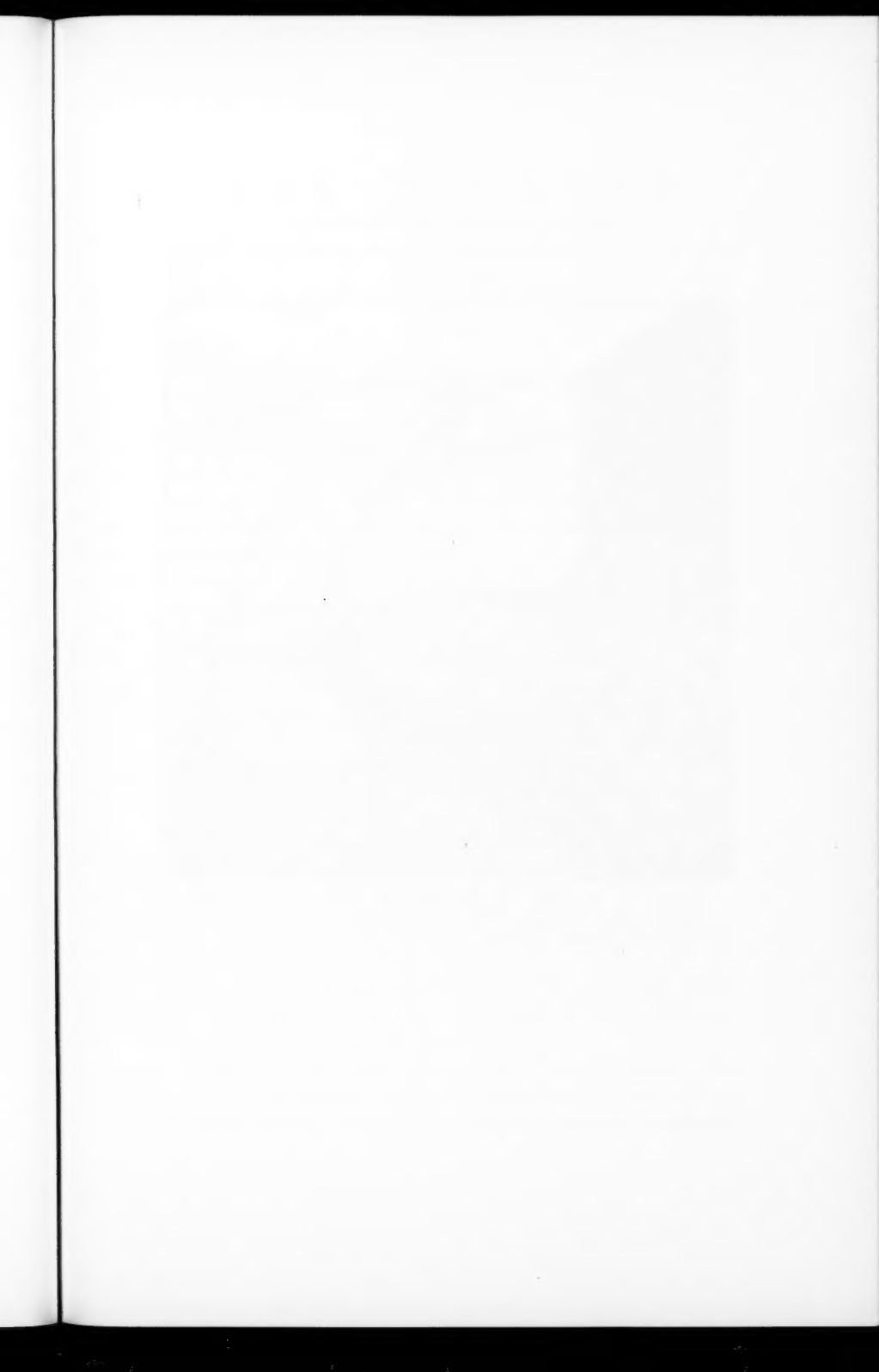
ROBERT J. HARRIS is the author of the story, *The Red Beard*, published in the issue of THE MIDLAND for February of this year, and of poems published in the issue for February, 1923. He has also contributed to *Brief Stories* and other magazines. He lives at Cleveland, Ohio, and is engaged in business there.

SHEA HARRISON is a young writer of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. As editor of the privately distributed journal, *Orpheus*, he is one of the leaders in the current literary development there.

GLENN WARD DRESBACH is one of those whom THE MIDLAND is proud to call "regular contributors", since his work has appeared in nearly every volume of the magazine. His latest collection of poems, *The Enchanted Mesa*, is just being published by Holt. His home is at Lanark, Illinois.

LEONARD LANSON CLINE contributed the cycle of poems, *Mad Jacob*, to the issue of THE MIDLAND for January of this year, and has been represented in *The American Mercury* and other magazines. He is at present engaged in journalistic work in New York.

AVERY ABBOTT contributed stories to the earlier volumes of THE MIDLAND and is also a well known contributor to other literary magazines. She lives at Omaha, Nebraska.





"Over a small knoll where the trail
seemed to reach into the sky,
a man came toward him."

H.S.

